STATMENT BY MINISTER

CTBT and Nuclear test by China

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): Madam Deputy Chairman, I had addressed this House on the issue of Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) on 15th July, setting out the Government's policy on this issue. The discussion that followed reflected the national consensus underlying the Government's policy. I am speaking today because of new developments of which hon. Members are aware—the 45th Test conducted by China on 29th July.

Several countries have issued statements expressing their varied points of view. Some of the leading ones while regretting or even condemning the Chines 45th nuclear test have at the same time, noted that after this test, China may join the other nuclear weapon States in observing a moratorium on nuclear explosive testing. On our part, we are dismayed by the nuclear tests carried out by nuclear weapon States, particularly, as CTBT negotiations are in progress. We have always believed that these tests take the world further away from the goal of universal nuclear disarmament. As this House knows, since 1945, the five nuclear seapon States have carried out 2047 test. USA and Russia have conducted the largest number—1032 and 715 respectively. France has conducted 210 tests while China and UK have conducted 45 tests each. These tests have contributed to the nuclear arms race and shown that partial steps do not lead to nuclear disarmament. India has taken a consistent and principled position on nuclear disarmament. This is why, since 1954, when Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru called for a ban on nuclear weapon tests, we have urged that the CTBT must be seen as a first step on the road to nuclear disarmament. The approach taken by India in the CTBT negotiations, therefore, calls for a genuinely comprehensive CTBT with a view to ending future development of nuclear weapons and placing the CTBT in the framework of a step-by-step process of nuclear disarmament leading to the elimination of all nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework. Ongoing testing programmes, whether at test sites or in laboratories, are clear indications that the nuclear weapons States are not willing to give up their reliance on their nuclear arsenals and consider CTBT merely as a non-proliferation measure. Such testing programmes inevitably give rise to questions relating to India's national security. While we have adopted the policy of restraint after demonstrating our capability, we remain fully conscious of the evolving security situation. We are committed to taking all steps necessary to enable us to cope with any threat that may be posed to the security of India. As Hon. Members are aware, I was in Jakarta last week to attend the meetings of ASEAN Regional Forum and the Post-Ministerial Conference.

There, I also had a number of bilateral meetings with Foreign Ministers from other countries present. Some of them, notably US Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Russian Foreign Minister Primakov, Foreign Minister Ikeda of Japan, Foreign Minister Downer of Australia and Canadian Foreign Minister Axworthy, discussed with me CTBT negotiations at Geneva. I elucidated in clear terms the Indian point of view. I also highlighted the consistency in our policy as well as the strength of conviction arising out of the national consensus. During multilateral meetings, this subject also came up. Many of our concerns were shared by other participants. These concerns were most clearly voiced by the Chairman, Indonesia's Foreign Minister Alatas, who appreciated India's principled stand both about the goal of achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world as well as the need to ensure that the CTBT bring an end to vertical proliferation. The CTBT negotiations have resumed in Geneva in

the Conference on Disarmament the day before yesterday, on 29th July. Our stand in the negotiations is appreciated by many countries. Several non-aligned countries are in favour of strenghtening the provisions relating to "scope" as also the references to nuclear disarmament in the draft treaty text. They show understanding of our position, and in particular, they acknowlege that the present formulation on Entry into Force is without precendent in treaty negotiating practice. Yet, these countries find it difficult to accept our proposals to modify the draft treaty text because of the rigid position adopted by a small number of countries. In our statements and in bilateral discussions, we have made it clear that India cannot sign the Treaty in its present form. We have also made it equally clear that India cannot permit any language in the draft treaty text which will impose an obligation on India, directly or indirectly. If there are attempts to push forward such a text, we will have to oppose such efforts. We continue to remain engaged in the negotiations in Geneva in order that our national interests are fully safeguarded. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There is an applause on your Statement. We will have the clarifications tomorrow.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN (Tamil Nadu): Madam, at what time?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We will decide about the time tomorrow in the morning because we have the Special Mentions, etc. So we will decide the time. But we will difinitely have the clarifications because it is an important Statement, an important stand of the Government. Gujralji, tomorrow we will inform you.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Madam, tomorrow afternoon the debate on the same subject will continue in the other House. So, I will come here either on the completion of the debate there or, if you wish, someother day. whatever it is.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Tomorrow morning we will know what the situation is and then we will take a decision. We are happy that you made a statement. I think the Members are happy with your stand, India's stand ...*(Interruptions)* He belongs to this House.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: We all welcome it, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now comes the two issues. One is The Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment) Bill, 1993. There is a resolution disapproving it and there are a lot of names—Satish Agarwalji, Ramdasji, Vishnukant Sastriji etc. Are you going to take this up now or are you going to take up the Peoples' Representation Act.

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): Madam, we have to take this up because it has to be passed in the other House also; otherwise the ordinance will lapse *(Interruptions)*.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: This is Employees' Provident Fund. Now, we have got three Bills. We have got the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment) Bill, 1993, we have got the Representation of the Peoples Act. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Madam, let us first take up the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment) Bill, 1993; then we can go to the other Bills.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We will take up the Provident Funds first ...*(Interruptions)*. He is opposing it.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Madam, with the permission of the House, I am simply moving my motion later on to withdraw it.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Why do you want to do that? I will permit you to speak on this.

I. STATUTORY RESOLUTION SEEKING DISAPPROVAL OF THE EMPLOYEES PROVIDENT FUNDS AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS (AMENDMENT) THIRD ORDINANCE, 1996 (NO. 24 OF 1996) PROMULGATED BY THE PRESIDENT ON THE 20TH JUNE, 1996

II. THE EMPLOYEES' PROVIDENT FUNDS AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1993

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: (Rajasthan): No, Madam; I want to move it. I move—

> "That this House disapproved the Employees Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment) Third Ordinance, 1996 (No. 24 of 1996) promulgated by the President on the 20th June, 1996."

I am moving this Statutory Resolution on two counts. One, because I have always been opposed to promulgation of ordinances and governance of the country through other agencies. The second one is, it has come to my notice that the Government of India is paying a meagre interest of 8% on Rs. 9000 crores which is deposited under this pension scheme. This amounts to exploitation of the workers or the employees. So, with this observation, I wish that hon. Minister will give an undertaking and assurance that so far as the workers' or employees' deposits in the pension funds are concerned, the Finance Ministry or the Government of India will not exploit it to their advantage and cheat them by paying a meagre interest of 8%. Here, I would like to point out that the Government of India itself is having the market borrowing at 14% to 15% and the general market rate of lending is 20% to 22%. So, in this liquidity crunch, it is really criminal on the part of the Government of India to misuse these funds. So, I demand that market rate interest should be paid on all these pension funds. The same question I raised earlier with respect to Railways also. With these two observations, I formally move my motion later on to withdraw my resolution.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Arunachalam.

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): Madam Deputy Chairma, I beg to move—

> "That the Bill further to amend the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952, as reported by the Select Committee, be taken into consideration."

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think earlier also we have discussed this Bill ...*(Interruptions)*. We have passed it actually *(Interruptions)*.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (Karnataka): Madam, there was also a unanimous report from the Standing Committee.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I remember correctly on the same day...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAGHAVJI (Madhya Pradesh): It was not discussed.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You are talking about now about this week. It was in the previous session, the Congress Government brought it. Anyway, Mr. Minister, you can speak now.

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: Madam, as the hon. Members are aware, the Employees Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 provides for institution of compulsory Provident Fund and Deposit-Linked Insurance Fund for the benefit of employees in factories and other establishments. These schemes constitute the main source of income security for